Ross Dowson archives – correspondence – Year 1976
Documents = bold italics

01_03	Letter from Maurice (F.), Vancouver, re: his news from BC election; no bounce from Stu (S's) article on BC
01_15	Letter to Tom C., Ottawa, offering an exchange with their new paper
01_15B	+Letter to Dept of Natural Res., Orono (ON), re: past purchase by RD of seedlings (for Camp); wish to place an order for next Spring
01_18	+Minutes of Toronto Branch (SL): report of Women's fraction, educational cttee report on forums, campus fraction report
02_05	Letter to the *Press,* Brock University, re: protesting their ''Dr. Strangelove'' articles on the Canadian military
02_07	+(Minutes) Camp Poundmaker Inc. Board of Directors meeting: SL/LSA reps present, Murray to build on his lot, need to improve water pump; disposal of lots, vote tally shows no LSA majority
02_14	*The Post-War Strike Wave 1945-48 (Forward Forum talk notes & Forum notice)*
02_08	Letter to John Glenn, Brantford, re: scandalous line of *Labor Challenge* on Africa, LSA not faring well in BC or Quebec
02_25	+United Left Slate convention on (York U.) elections – program drawn up by SL candidates
04_00	*Publication date of Pamphlet,* ''The subversion of our orientation to the NDP'' (See date written: February 1974)
05_17	Memo re: ''projected shareholders meeting at Camp Poundmaker and tree planting;'' LSAer announced it cancelled and left others to do the work; RD`s protest of this unilateral action
05_31	Letter to the Editor of *Canadian Dimension*, re: welcoming Warnock`s article ''Imperialism and the Canadian Left;'' but taking up Moore-Wells' valid criticism of differentiating tendency outlooks and judging them accurately
05_31B	Letter to John Gallagher, *Canadian Dimension*, re: submitting a letter for publication on the Warnock article, plus comments on the Marxist Institute (in Toronto)

05_99	***Publication date of pamphlet,* ‘’The socialist vanguard and the NDP;”** by RD written in 1970 as ‘’Our orientation to the NDP – as a strategy – and its tactical application’’
06_10	Letter to Caroline (Lund?), SWP National Office, re: giving permission to use RD`s name as supporter of a statement
07_12	++Letter to Friends: tax bill paid by RD, allocations due; Murray’s cabin progress, maintenance done but no water supply
08_12	Letter to niece Anne (D.), re: building Murray`s house at camp; CLC setting date for a general strike; some suggested summer reading
09_06	Letter to Maurice and Cynthia (F.) re: gays around SL and the gay Movement; the labor movement and Labor Day parade, LSAers agree with *Forward* line in a debate on CD coverage
09_08	Letter to Frank Maley, Barrie, re: his letter to *CD,* and RD`s letter on Canadian nationalism and Trotskyism; recent trends of Trotskyism in Canada; RD`s review of Lord`s article on Canadian art
10-14	Handwritten note about meeting poet Milton Acorn and promoting the poem ‘’Do Not Turn Out for the Day of Protest’’
10_15	Letter to Milton Acorn, re: his poem read at October 14 rally; hit TV and mass distributed with *Forward*
10_18	++Letter to Comrade Sims (LSA): tax payment received, need for a Board meeting, insurance due
10_28	Letter to niece Anne D.), re: any news of Rimouski on October 14; QFL comes out in support of PQ; SL distributes October 14 and other activities, RD loses his job
10_28B	Letter to Leila Speisman, re: his friendly) layoff at the library
11_15	Letter to Art (Grey), re: October 14 in Midland, Toronto activities
12_07	Letter to John (Glenn), Brantford, re: results of civic election for NDP and comrades; books and the problem with state capitalism
12_07B	Letter to Maurice and Cynthia (F., Vancouver), re: RD says ‘’thank God for *Forward*’’ when looking at *LC* or *Old Mole* these days; only bright spot in elections was Heap`s victory in face of red-baiters

January 3rd,1976
53 Gerrard St.,W
Toronto

Muarice Flood
2265 East Pender Street
Vancouver 6, ~~xxxxx~~ B.C.

Dear Muarice;

John Glenn was so good as to turn over your letter to him along with the enclosures on the recent BC provincial electio n. It was very good to get this material. I gave an educational at our forum on the meaing of the electoral defeates for labor party formations in B.C. some weeks back and uufortunately proved unable to get any material from anywhare--the Vancouver dailies in the library were a way back due to the back log from the postal strike--and even the offices that the Sun and Province maints in here has nothing later than the 9th. Just by chance someone who had worked in the Rosemary Brown campaign left some of the election material of her campaign at the store. But now, even though late, thanks to you we now have the BC Fed leaflet etc .

Of course I am sorry that Stu's article on the NDP and t he back to work legislation gets no bounce from your comrades out there. But I think you are mistaken in thinking that Stu or anyone here through the publication of that material is trying to run herd over you comrades there. ~~Wxmkxdmxxxbxmxxxxxxxx~~ The develop ments were of considerable importance and of such a character that we felt unable to go to press without commenting on them. I raised the importance of Wayne and or Stu coMtacting your comrades out there to get the benefit of your opinion and experience and of course to give it high respect in their thinking--I am sure they did make contact. I think that it would be very very good if as you suggest you a ll got together to write up your view and send it along for publication. Perhaps the differences are based o n misimpressions from this end--at anyrate ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ it would now be very good for our readers to be acquainted with your considered opinion. It could be published under pseudonyms if you wished. I hope you do this not only because the comrad es of the SL are anxious to know your viewa and if necessary to revise their own--but also because of our readers. We do not want to miseducate them. It could end up as a really positive experience.

Since I started this note we have just had a visit fro m your old friend Randy. He came in to pick up the latest ICP's--- the reply by Mandel and Co to Hansen-Novack. When I told him that I thought this reply did not leave Hansen and Novakc, much to my personal regret as I feel I owe both of them considerable in my political development--he expressed agreement. He told me that he has pulled out of the gay movem nt. ..as being peripheral to the NDP and the union movement--an important factor being th e inability of the various Trotskyists in the gay movemnt to work out a common line. He expressed what I think is genuine interest in coming to our forums. He started off by saying that he was sorry that he missed our New Years affair.

The NY affair, plus the two horse open sleigh event the next day was a big success. --about 60 tothe social--about 40 t o the winter sports. Regards to Cythia and the child.

comradely

enter exchange work Forward Send a file

Forward
53 Gerrard Street East
Toronto

Jan 15, 1976

Tom Clement
Ottawa Worker, P.O.Box 414, Station A
Ottawa.

Dear Comrade Clement;

I take it that it was you who dropped into Forward Books at the above address a week or so ago and with whom I had an interesting discussion.

I have been looking forward to receiving some copies of Ottawa Workers that you promised to send us in exchange for Forward. I have just received copies of No.6 and No 7. Would you send along copies of the other issues you have put out so we could have a file.

From the two issues I have read I gather that you consider the NDP just another capitalist party--but at the same time that you do not either see the need or the possibility of projecting another political party or even formation on the Canadian scene. I gather also that you favor the separation of Cdn labor from US labor rather than the establisment of Cdn autonomy. I am looking forward to getting a clearer or more correct view of your opinions from others issues--and when possible an opportunity to exchange opinions with you.

I hope that you will find Forward of interest to you and your associated.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

January 15, 1976
Ross Dowson
40 Homewood Ave, Apt 2311
Toronto

Dept of Natural Res
Orono

Dear Sirs;

Some four or five years ago I purchased from you something like 500 to 700 seedlings which I planted on a portion of the 25 acres that I own in Tyendinaga Township-----South half of Lot 39 on the 4th Concession. They turned out quite successfully--although I suppose as is common place they are not growing fast enough to meet my anticipations. Very few of them failed to take. They were a mixture of pine and spruce. This time I would like to concentrate more on pine of whatever kind you handle. The few maple and poplar did not do so well.

I would like to place an order and make payment in anticipation that I might have them for planting this Spring, if possible.

Would you kindly inform me as to what is available, the price and when you think that I can obtain them. The ones that I last purchased were quite young and small but I understand that we have more mature trees at a slightly greater cost.

Looking forward to hearing from you at first opportunity

sincerely

Ross Dowson

Minutes of Toronto Branch January 18, 1976--commenced at 8:10 pm.

1: Chairman : secretary - Kent
2: Attendance : Absent with reason: Roy, Chaplin, Wallce, Rubur, Goldman, Wilson
3: Minutes: Motion: to adopt minutes as read. Ammendment to delete point 9 as erroneous. Mtion carried u animously as ammended.
4: Organizers Report by Frost: Recommendation by the executive a) that Anderson be given a leave of absence, b) that Frost be replaced as interim organizer, c) that Deutch replace Anderson as organizer and that he go on staff, d) that Hansen be dropped from educational committee due to pressure of other opportunities e) that Fitzgerald nominationsbe open to replace Hansen on educational committee--the executive nominating Fitzgerald. No further nominations--Fitzgerald aaclaimed. Frost welcomed Fitzgerald to membership in the Socialist League. Report adopted

5 Report from Women's fraction by Volpe: a) women's fraction planning a social inviting smypahizers and close contacts on Saturday evening January 31. b) womens fraction is opening a discussion on wages for housework c) a day care reform alliance has been set up. The committee against Day Care curbacks is holding a demonstration Jan 17 .(d) Women's fraction is preparing an intervention in the Metro Region NDP conference to be held over March 5,6,7.(e) the fraction discussed problem of activating the Morgenthaler amnesty Committee. Motion to adopt report with points (d) and (e) being referred to the executive for further discussion. Moved and carried.

6 Report from the educational committe by Frost . Motion that the Jan 25th internal be slated as an external on Angola January 30th. Ammendment that we continue with the subject as an internal on the 25th and that we also slated it as an external on the 30th. passed. Nomiations for internal opened. Fitzgerald will speak at both the internal and external educational. Report on the last forum by Deutch. 27 attended, several of our York U contacts. Scott's evalution of book on Rape well received, disucssaion very good. It was suggested that a copy of our press be placed on every chiar at our forums. ...and that chair should encourage those in attendance to subscribe to Forward. Internal by Levi was thought to spend too much time on interoductory and background material at the expense of the topic--the use of the slogan For an independent (and) socialist Canada. Motion to adopt report carried.

Break for dues and pledges

7 - Interim social report. by Cameron. The social committee is considering taking over responsibility for the after forum social affairs, it will be recommending a plan for a league social shortly. Thorson urged that preparations for a big May Day social be got underway-- report adopted as information.

8 - Campus fraction report by Levi: Motion from fraction that 3L consider recrutiment of Mac. Information report on progress of OFS anti-cutbacks Jan 21st action. Report on ULC food action campaign and preliminary discussion on elections to student body. Suuplementary report by Red on food boycott prject and student co-op operation. M and carried that report be adopted.

9-New Business - Report by Stone on Metro Region NDP conference, suggested possibilities of our intervention, and NDP teachers caucus . Motion to refer to executive carried.
- Deutch moved a motion of thanks to Frost for his efforts as interim organizer. passed unanimously. Survey on meeting night affirmed Sundays.
- Kent reported on teachers strike and Channel 19 program on labor.

Caldndar read.
Meeting adjourned.

February 5, 1976

Forward, Box 778, Adelaide St PO
Toronto

Press
Brock University
St Catharines, Ont.

to the editor,

When a friend heard that I was writing an article on the Canadian military budget he showd me the articles by Michael D'Souza appearing in issues November 6 and December 4, 1975

I must say, the more I examined them the more I was appalled to see such material in print, particularly in the press financed by our idealistic and humanistic youth.

Now, when there are vast budgetary cutbacks taking place with more in the offing, meaning an absolute and a qualitiative decline in education which Brock and other university students are protesting, along with higher taxes etc etc, you can write and publish articles that ruminate over murder machines as to their capacity to deliver more bang--and blood---for the buck , is beyond comprehension.

A real Dr Strangelove performance by Press

At the very least you should publish my all too short article appearing in the enclosed copy of Forward. It an all material in Forward is reprintable without fee. Should you see fit to do so I would appreciate it if you would xdmdo so with all the appropriate graphics--from Verdun, to Dresden to Vietnam.

sincerely

Ross Dowson

CAMP POUNDMAKER INCORPORATED

Board of Directors meeting February 7, 1976

Chairman: Ross Dowson
Secretary: Darrel Furlotte

Meeting convened at 10:45 AM

Directors present: Lois Bedard, George Bryant, Ross Dowson, Brian Duhig, Victor Hugh, John Riddell, Darrel F Joan Newbigging, Murray Dowson. RDO'C — replacing Gary

Agenda: 1) Discussion of operation of Camp last year and next year; 2) Disposal of lot

1) Operation of Camp:

Report by Ross Dowson on last year's activities.

Moved that the board of directors agree that Murray Dowson apply for a building permit for the construction of a domicile on his lot. Carried

Moved that a work weekend be held at the Camp on April 24-25. Carried

Moved that George Bryant and Victor Hugh comprise a committe to investigate the water pump system and report back to the board of directors with a recommendation by April 24, 1976. Carried

Moved that the officers of the Camp be authorized to spend resources this summer for gravel, fences, and trees. Carried.

2) Disposal of lot:

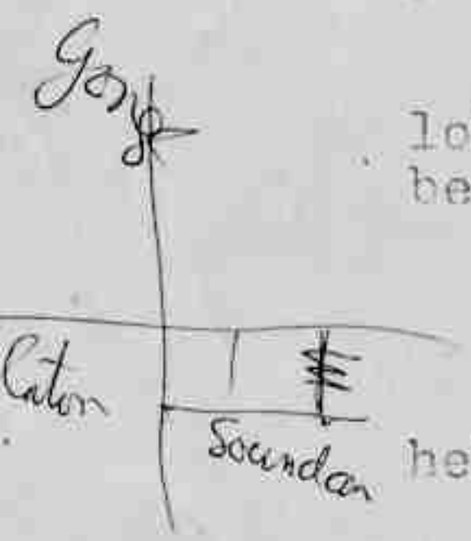
Discussion of criteria to be used in selecting a new lot owner.

Moved that payment in advance of one half the purchase price be one of the criteria.

Moved to table motion until next meeting. Carried

Moved that one of the criteria to be considered for lot ownership be sponsorship and that each corporate member sponsor only one candidate.

Moved to table until next meeting. Carried



Moved that next meeting be March 15 at 8:00 PM, to be held at 44 Dunfield Ave. Carried

Moved to adjourn. Carried. 1:05 PM

2m E of Yonge
N from Sudan &
Eglinton

Brantford

Glenn

Febraury 8, 1976
40 Homewood Ave #2311
Toronto

Dear John:

Gord gave me a note to the effect that you would like a copy of a book or pamphlet ~~mentionxe~~ntitled Zionisim and the Arab Revolution. I assume he got the title down right. Well I have chek d the Pathfinder catalongue and th the latest volume of Bowker's Books in Print and can fi d no such title. Now I didn't have the time to go through the Jerusalem Times I thinkit is called, published in Vancouver from who we have obtained Palestine material before. If you could chek out the title for me I would be happy to get you the item.

Things are moving along here. We have recruited another fellow at York-- a Turkish youth who seems to be a fine type. The comrades at York are now moving into the election campaign. Either our new comrade Bob Hominee or a young women active in the NDP who works well with us will run for the presient--Dale's term has expired.

With this note I am going to beat you with the inside dope. Did you happen to read the editorial in the latest Labor Challenge. The most hair raising position yet. ~~Hmmm~~ It is on Angola and the MPLA whose victory is now opening up the w ole African revolution. ~~Thexmdmt~~ as you have probably noted the FNLA and Unita have not only been proven to be tools of the imperialists but have in several instances bee guilty of practising mass murder of supporters of the MPLA. But in its latest issue LC is still crying for a coalition, not supporting the MPLA but calling for a coalition with thes these counter-revolutionairies. And equally ignominious--it is not hailing, but scandalously condemneng the Soviet Union and Cuba for ~~intx~~intervention-- for ~~its~~ supporting the revolution. Its comments on Soviet intervention give nothing at all to our longstanding Trotskyist understanding of the contradcitory character of the Soviet Bureaucracy--that is is capable of supporting revolutionary struggles outside of the Soviet areas. It panders to concepts of Soviet imperialism. It is incredible to see how far they are prepared to let their factionalism carry them off

Inside dope Number II. Jackie Henderson pulled out of Vancouver for Seattle. She apparently was not going to the recent LSA/LSO convention They sent her the fare. She flew to Toronto but di not more than put in a token appearance at the convention. Sherwood was in, and expressed contempt and amusment at the LSA's buttering up to their operation in Montreal. This is one place where the LSA is supposed to have made some gains over the last two years--not so says Sherwood. He suggests that they are going to swallow the LSA-LSO if anything. Podolack who I met tongiht in Toronto tells me that there is a two way division in the RMG--the gunhoers under Smilie and the consolidators under Flexer. Scomerall has pulled out of the IS. So we see a continuing process of disitegrations. But of course things have to get "worse" before then can get better.

Hope the family is well. Got all the clippings. Some very useful ones- particularyl about the hospitals. Do you think that some of them may defy the govtn and continue to operate under local control

(letter ends)

Wednesday February 25, 1976

United Left Slate Convention on the CYSF elections

Programmatic submission of Dale R., Abie W., Paul K.

I In terms of the priorities for the programme the following to be considered central:

anti-cutbacks
student unionism and student activism
student-faculty-staff control
woman's rights

and that the specific formulations for these central priorities be :

Vote ULS

for a

Student Union that will

Fight against cutbacks and make education a right

Fight for Woman's Rights

Fight for a university controlled by Students-Faculty and Staff

II In terms of the programme itself, the form that it should take on is that of a series of programmatic blocs to consist of the following:

1) cutbacks
2) student-faculty-staff control
3) student unionism
4) woman
5) for a university against discrimination
6) students and labor

and as well a section on the previous year's ULC-led CYSF , endorsing its record. (7)

Each of these sections in the programme should include the following points:

1) Cutbacks

-no tuition fee increases
-rollback increases in tuition
-a sub-section on food
-on student unemployment pointing to the lack of
research and development in Canada cutting across grad. employment
-raising government subsidies to U.S. subsidiaries
while social services to Canadians are cut back
-tax the corporations
-opposition to social sector cutbacks in general

2) Student-Faculty-Staff Control

-replacing the Board of Governors with a governing council under student-faculty-staff control
-to call for an end to corporate domination and point out the strong U.S. corporate ties of the Board of Governors

3) Student Unionism

-for a strong central student union to fight for students interests
-to bring Bethune College into CYSF
-to support the Ontario Federation of Students and the National Union of Students

40 Homewood Ave, #2311
Toronto M4Y 2K2
961-4554
May 17, 1976

Re projected shareholders meeting at Camp Pounmaker and tree planting

Dear friend;

As you will recall at our last meeting on March 15 we set aside an April weekend to go to the camp , to plant trees, and among others to settle the matter of the lot that is now available--the latter being of some moment as summer is on the way and the new owner would perhaps want to make some immediate moves.

As the date approached and we had heard nothing about the availability of the trees I phoned Orono Nurderies and they told me that the frost was not yet out of the ground there. Shortly after I received notification that the trees were available and had to be picked up within a short span of days. After consultation and agreement with Darrell it was agreed that May 8-9 was highly suitable and I thereby committed us to pick them up in advance of that weekend. I made arrangements with Ron Hugh as who agreed to pick them up in his van and a letter was sent out by myself to everyone concerned.

Ron Hugh found he had to attend the Ontario CUPE convention and so a new appointed had to be made with the Nursery to pick up the trees at a different time. Finally Vic agreed to pick the m up but because of the hospitalization of Mike he could only stay over Saturday to help put them in . I took time out of a hectic schedule and at considerable strain to my limited resources to go up to the camp on Thursday in anticipation that all the shareholders and numerous friends would be arriving on the Saturday or Sunday. I cleanred up the kitchen,the lodgle hall, opened up the cabins, set up the rain barrels so we would have water, and generally put things in order.

Vic

On Saturday, around noon as Murray, Lois, Ross and several friends prepared to get the planting underway Darrell and Joan arrived. Darrell informed us that he had decided at least on behalf of the Toronto Social Science Assn and friends of the LSA *****I do not know about John, George or Brian*****to call off the tree planting. He said something to the effect that someone who he considered an authority thought that this weekend conditions were not favorable for successful tree planting . Although the trees were there and had to be planted very shortly he left to make the 150 mile trip back to Toronto

Although with considerable difficulty the small squad who had come managed to get almost all the trees planted---at least 1,700 of them. Decisions had to be made without consultation with other shareholders, including John, Brian and George on whose lots we planted trees

A few personal observations that I would like to make. The weekend date was chosen in full consultation and agreement with Darrell and those he consulted. It was also determined by the expert decisions of the Department of Lands and Forests to whom we had to comit ourselves well in advance. It is very hard indeed to take Darrell's statement that some other opinion was in anyway relevant, not to speak of it becoming the decisive one for himself and others he contacted.

by Darrell site
To be informed upon his appearnace at the job ~~strick~~, just before his taking off, that a bloc of shareholders agreed to not participate without even advance notice ,is profoundly disturbing. It is hard to take Darrell's statem nt seriously that he could not contact Ross, leave a message at the bookstore or contact neither Lois, neither Vic, nor Murray--all in oronto until late Friday evening or early Saturday morning. Since the decision had been uanimously arrived at and a whole series of supplementary actions set off it would be understandable if some were to characterize this as treating the time and energies of other shareholders with ~~contempt~~ cynicism and contempt, and not boding well for the necessary relations to make Poundmaker a real success.

I should bring it to your attention that some shareholders have questioned as to whether certain shareholders really want to participate in the corporation but indeed may actually be open to the idea of selling their shares so that they could be made avaialable to others who want to build the camp. They havev informed me that they are prepared to advance the funds that would make it possible for anyone ~~to withdraw~~ or any group wanting to withdraw to be fully recompensed as per the agreement.

The decision at to ownership of the open lot has yet to be made. One person who made a deposit has withdr an it but another is still holding in in the belief that it will soon be avaiable.

At our last meeting as I recall it we authorized Vic following his and George' investigation and report to proceed with purchasing the pump for the well. However Vic has told me that George has now raised the questions as to whether we want to make ~~the~~ expenditure for a pump. Time is important here too. In the light of our experience with the tree planting it is no longer clear whether this opinion is only held by George or is actually a new opinion of a bloc of shareholders, not formerly expressed.

I will proceed with an attempt to hold a meeting as soon as possible to clear up any matters upon being contacted ~~by~~

fraternally

Ross Dowson

May 31, 1976

Letter to the Editor
Canadian Dimension

John Warnock's article in your March issue, Imperialism and the Canadian Left, is a very welcome contribution. Our appetite is now well whetted for the follow-up which he promises will outline the program of an anti-imperialist struggle, and presumably the forces that will rally in its course and establish a socialist Canada.

While it may well have been frustrating it was certainly not un-useful to have developed his arguments around the Moore-Wells book Imperialism and the National Question in Canada. As one who is thanked by the authors in the frontispeice "for time, interest and constructive criticism" I should say that the essence of my advice to Moore was that he should completely re-think the whole matter - along the line of certain articles by myself that I loaned him which expressed substantially the same points so well developed by Warnock. It is necessary to clear away a whole accumulation of debris so that we can get to the essence of the problem and commence building a useful structure.

Warnock's aim is to aid the left to overcome its present disintegration - to resolve the national question. Thus he stands on solid ground in protesting Moore-Wells' lumping together all the various groups in the radicalization, without distinction, as "left nationalists," and resorting to what he correctly calls slander, when they state that underlying their opposition's position is national chauvinism. There is no question that such actions constitute a barrier to the clarification of the real differences and make the needed unity extremely difficult.

By the same token it would seem necessary to protest Warnock's own cavalier characterization of the Trotskyite organizations as anti-nationalist. It is also necessary to protest his tendency to equate small organizations with sectarianism.

Warnock notes the existence of five organizations that call themselves Trotskyist. But strangely he does not show that he has the slightest inkling as to why a fragmentation of what was once united in a common movement has taken place. Suffice it to say that one of the key issues in this process was the national question in Canada, with the majority leadership of the League for Socialist Action-(LSO) suddenly, in 1972, reversing field and adopting a position that is substantially the view expressed in the Moore-Wells pamphlet. One of the five, the Socialist League and its monthly publication Forward, is in substantial agreement with Warnock's critique of this pamphlet.

Marx, who Warnock would appear to clear of any taint of sectarianism never belonged to anything but small and impoverished organizations. While it is a fact that there can be no socialist Canada until the Canadian workers organize a mass party that has that aim and has the support of the decisive majority of the working class, Warnock seems to evaluate organizations primarily from the point of view of their size. In reference to the Communist Party of Canada he says that "Its strength among the Canadian working class in the 1940's is now finally recognized." However it was then already following the party line from Moscow and, certainly with the adoption of "collective security", a euphemism for "peaceful coexistence", and Popular Frontism, firmly in the camp of what Warnock says can only be described as socialidemocracy.

Smallness and sectarianism are by no means the same thing--the one can result from the objective situation beyond the control of the socialists and their organizati the other is a disease that, if socialists do not innoculate themselves against, can destroy even a large organization. One could define sectarianism as a refusal to ort or to struggle for partial, that is reforms, and transitional demands, as a tendency to turn one's back on such mass reformist organizations as the NDP and the trade unions, and as a tendency of an organization that does not yet have hegemony over the left but acts as if its concept of itself is already a reality.

At one point in his contribution Warnock asks, what happened to the radicalizati of the late 60s and early seventies? To be sure it developed largely in the youth and the campus milieu. But can it be dismissed as Warnock appears to do with a quote from Lenin that would characterize that radicalization as one of petit-bourgeois driven to frenzy, as a fad?

That radicalization presented the entire left with a tremendous opportunity--- to link it up with the NDP and the forces of organized labor --to help raise the level of the whole, and to sustain it and carry it forward until such time as the main batallions of labor, under the crisis of capitalism, would commence to move out as they are now beginning today. To be sure important elements in this radicalization made some serious errors but the primary factor which has resulted in a considerable dissipation, was not the fault of the new radicals, but must more properly be placed at the door of the leadership of the NDP and the trade unions.

But no doubt Warnock will come to grips with this problem in his follow-up article.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

May 31, 1976

Canadian Dimension

Dear John Gallagher:

Harry Paine told me that he renewed acquaintance with you when last out in Winnipeg. .. and passed on my regards.

It was good to see your becoming editor of Dimension which is playing such an important role in the left.

I hope that you will find space for the enclosed letter. I think it is a useful contribution to the interest that Warnock's valuable contribution has no doubt stirred up. I tried to keep it short knowing the space problem that confrontsyou--and to a couple of points. I am sending it registered to be sure that you get it. Of course Moore is not at all unaquained with Warnock's main arguments--he is just caught up in the dogma that he thinks is Marxism. The Marxist institute suffered a split--the one current which possibly Moore is associated with was not able to carry a very successful series last Fall--I went to one that Norman Penner was slated to address. Penner was unable to appear but the turn-out was miniscule and from what Bill Johnson who is active there told me only a couple of the classes got off the ground. Moore is now in the RMG. Leo Johnson addressed a previous year forum where he claimed that inter-imperialist rivalries where resulting in a withdrawal of US investment in Canda--a certain rise of Japanesee and West German, and a growth in indigenous Canadian capital interests. That speech could probably be obtained from the Institute should Warnock want it

with comradely greetings

Ross Dowson

June 10, 1976

Apt 2311 - 40 Homewood Ave
Toronto, M4Y 2K2

SWP National Office

Dear Caroline; (Lund?)

Thanks for sending the material. Yes, I have been reading the Healyite shit and in fact had a bit of a run in with some of its purveyors here in Toronto at a public meeting.

Yes, you are welcome to use my name in connections with the statement. I hold no official office in the Socialist League so you will have to associate me with a Canadian Trotskyist monthly Forward

with revolutionary greetings

Ross Dowson

Ross Dowson, # 2311
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto, M4Y 2K2

July 12, 1976

Dear friend:

The tax bill for Camp Poundmaker has come in and I have advanced payment to avoid our having to pay a penalty. It has risen to $26[illegible]34 from last year's $250.80. The 2,000 trees that were planted this spring, in the overwhleming majority have rooted and appear to be flourishing, particularly the poplars which were planted right across the top lots at the bottom of the first ridge. The pines and maples which we scattered through the bush and the cabins, by the elms, which are still dying, are also coming along well. They cost $20.00. We have also had half a load of gravel spread on the road down the hill at $16.00. The total expenses therefore as of now stand at $296.34.

Since we have yet to make the decision as to who can buy the former Shapiro lot I have divided the costs into 45 instead of 46 units, as we did last year, and worked from the statement of interest in the camp as attached to the agreement. The allocation of the costs is as follows:

Lois Bedard	72.49	Brian D[illegible]	6.59
Vic Hugh	26.36	George B[illegible]	6.59
TSS&ES	158.16	John Riddell	6.59
Murray Dowson	6.59	Stev H[illegible]	6.59
Ross Dowson	6.59		

I would appreciate it if these bills were repaid in the return mail to the above address.

Murray Dowson is coming along with the building of his cabin for which he obtained a permit with no difficulty. The lodge and the facilities are in good shape. One encampment was held over the July first weekend. The playing field and meadow were given their second mowing. Vegetation killer was purchased and a first dosage was applied to the volley ball and badminton courts. The [illegible] equipment for table tennis, badminton and volley ball was brought up to the requirements of a functioning operation. The kitchen and the frg refrigerators in the lodge were scrubbed out. Some dead elms on the campsite were cut out.

There has been considerable rain and the vegetation is in good shape. We have cancelled previous arrangements for plowing the lower field which did not work out and are working on other plans. The dam has been put in at the park down the river. We hope that the facilities will be put to increased use over the summer.

Of course there is no water on the camp site as nothing has been done about the pump--and someone has been derpived of the use of a lot which we have made no decision on. No one has written any suggestion as to how we should proceed on this matter.

fraternally Ross Dowson

(handwritten letter)

Aug 12/76

Dear Anne (D.)

Well, we raised the beams on Murray and Jeanette`s summer home last weekend. Murray had (with Mike Hugh`s help) put them together and Bill M. and I went down to help raise them. It will be a fine place with a view of the valley. And I started the Nootka screen which I will hang across the front of the second floor room space in Lois`s cottage, serving as a movable wall. I am in the store right now to relieve Gord and Dale to finish up the work on the paper so that it will come off the press on Friday. Today the CLC executive will set the date for the one-day general strike. A big development which will open up all kinds of minds to the bigger questions as to the nature of capitalism and what has to be done to replace it. The radicalization will now take on a new depth and stability than its earlier phase (its youth phase) could. There should be high spirits among the people at the Port Elgin operation. They will play a big role in rousing other sectors of the union movement to get in there. I see they will be appealing to the students (at Lawrence Park) to join in. We will be taking Forward into the Labor Day parade. I have written a polemic against the rest of the self-proclaimed revolutionists as they revealed themselves and who don`t grasp what is happening, in their polemic against ‘’Labor`s Manifesto’’ adopted at the CLC convention.

I am surprised you didn`t dig the ‘’Good Soldier.’’ However now that you will be coming away from *(illegible…)* I suppose you know Claire has got a job at Eaton`s translating – very good! I have just asked and no one has seen her here in the noon hour. She is at College Street – but maybe the job hasn`t started yet. Lois will be back this coming weekend. Jerry is headed out to New York. I was just speaking to Jeanette – everyone is gawking at TV(…) they have finished the typing course… but I urged them now that they know the general idea to get to practising the lessons one hour a day so that they can actually get to type. I also suggested that they should make some more of the frieze at Lois`cottage. You might suggest that they do them on linoleum rather than wood. It is easier to work – do so more accurately – and linoleum can be painted as easily as wood. The cutters I gave you are actually for linoleum. I phoned Unsworth to have them mail you 2 books that I am sure are in the collection in the basement and which you are ready to read, ‘’Man`s Wordly Goods’’ by Huberman which is a good popularization of the evolutionary concept of society and social relations – and Trotsky`s ‘’In Defence of Marxism.`` There are parts in the latter book which will prove a little difficult but it is a polemic which is so honest and above board, so open – that I am confident that you will be able to follow it. Yes – you will see the contending views seeking clarification –then confronting and amplifying – then resolving into their fundamental difference. And of course it deals with a key question – the nature of the Soviet Union. Ron *(Rosenthal –ed.)* claims to be an adherent of LT`s views but holds *(illegible – probably ‘’different views on the SU’’ – becoming a member of the state capitalists, the IS—ed.)*

Sept 6, 1976 Labor Day

Vanc uver

Dear Maurice and Cynthia;

Stephen came over to the store and then to my apartment where I dined him to a pizza supper. We must have talked over a wide range of matters for about 3 hours. I found it well worthwhile--I hope he did too. I would be suprised if he opposed joining the NDP--he is young and inexperienced but not an ultra left. My impression is very good--although I did not get clarity on his projection of the gay movement developing as a political movement of its own. Incidently I gather that Gord did not tell you that Randy raised the matter of joining the SL on his own, and after several discussions was accepted as a member. Probably you know he was in charge of the demo that came off yesterday. Gord tells me that it was a big success--bigger and better than the previous ones...with various contingents--NDP, Workers, Jews, identified by banners. The Ontario provincial president who Addison waxed enthusiastic over in LC a few issues ago addressed the assembly at City Hall where the SL geetings and others were read out. Unfortunately Randy came down with hepatitis the day before the parade--his absence was formally noted at the meeting. The Damien case dominated the affair--if I recall correctly Gord said that the Swiss or Swedish groups greetings centered in on Damien. As you probably know there has been a struggle to get the Damien case moving---the LSA woman who chairs the committee has been balloxing things up at every turn. When Rany raised some of these problems at a branch meeting several weeks ago I was suprised to learn that Body Politic refused to publish a protest written by Harry against their stupid attack on the extensive article that appeared in the Star Weekly rotogravure. on Damien. We have agreed to carry it, after Harry thinks the legal implications over, in the next issue. If we decide to carry that and of course we will say something on this weekends gay actions, it is doubtful if we will use the exceelent material you sent us on the Vancouver Sun case. ...at least not in this issue.

And thanks too for the material on Jean Rands and bank organiziation. There is a drive going on in Brantford -Simcoe area here--the home of some of the major trust and bank interests. It seems that radicals in this area of employment when they heard about the breakway and setting up of a new Canadian Chemcial workers union approached them to get in behind it. Alas, trade union notes have been displaced by the coverage we want to give to the October 14 affair. This is underway in the big scale. The Toronto and district labor council last week outlined its plans---if I remember correctly(1--they are calling for picketting on all job sites--to convince workers not to go into work and(2 to rally to the big varsity stadium for a mass meeting 3) then to got of the big govt office complexes to win support of or express our sympathy for the civil servants who are threatened with big fines if they leave their work--then to the union offices where there will be beer and discussions. Fortunately it will not be difficult to project the way ahead here in Ontario as elections are in the offing and the NDP is gearing up. Lewis headed the Labor Day parade today and will be the guest speaker at the official exhibition meeting held in the grounds after the parade arrives there. A couple of the major official floats publicized the October action---and there were many signs in many sections of the parade building it up. All the left was there--all distributing their press although the LSA stands firm on sales only. Hard to understand but the RMG only had their old issue which had almost nothing if I recall correctly on the October 14 action. We sent comrades out to the parades both in Hamilton and in Brantford. Strange to say there are no prades in Oshawa, Peterboro or Kingston.

It had a leaflet too which I understand still calls for General Strike of unlimited duration.

Now that I write this I did not pick up a copy of Labor Challenge--I am embarassed to approach them--they stand so passively trying to sell--with usually quite useless elements taking their time up talking to them. If a discussion I inadvertently got involved in tended anything--there is some ferment in the LSA over my last article on Labor's Manifesto. Helen and Lloyd Olson were over here for a holiday and Pat Schulz invited me to a little party. Somehow, I don't recall how, but the Manifesto came up with Vern Olson very quickly telling us that he agreed with the Forward article and thought the LC article quite incorrect. Ernie Tate tried to defend the LC article and against my comments that it only expressed a position by selecting what elements of the bourgeois press were saying in the first article and then quoting at length what Gomick in Cdn Dimension said--I must admit I was really hoping that they would comment on my letter that appeared in that issue of Cdn Dimension and was given such prominence on the inside cover dealing with the divisions in the Trotskyist movement and Cdn nationalism. Ernie's defence of LC brought Vern's brother into the sitaution where he too agreed with our article--largely on the basis of some discussions he had managed to have with some fellows who participated in a union caucus that he had organized when he was active here in the union arena. Lloyd's and Vern's support of Forward against LC got Tate all excited. Newbigging, Mckenzie and a couple of other LC supporters kept their silence.

Oh yes, Stephen noted that incredible article by Addison on the NDP Ont. convention--that naive voyage of discovery about the progressive character of the NDP. That article reminded me of the one that Fidler wrote some years ago and which became the big issue with the RCT, then Mandel, and which in their reply to Mandel Young and Riddell admitted was a mistake

Glad to hear that you are in the final stages of preparations for another flood. After some days of deadly Rozzie delivered her boy--large and in good health. And what is this about a book--a full length novel. Can you hope to get it published. Incidently in ordering a new batch of Penguins, after thinking that I had managed to read all of Balzac's Human Comedy I find another --and then another Zola which makes a trilogy out of Earth and Germinal.

Good luck, Cynthia---comradely regards

Ross Dowson

September 8, 1976
#2311, 40 Homewood ave.
Toronto, M4Y 2K2
961-4554

Frank Maley
14 Sophia St. W
Barrie, Ont.

Dear Frank;

In fact I was not at all suprised to receive your letter. As soon as I saw Sophia Street I said --oh-yes Frank , of course. In fact I have been for the last month or so thinking of looking up your address and dropping you and Sadie a line. I read your letter in the Cdn Forum and intended to send you a copy of our paper. Then I saw your name somewhere else---and of course I figured you follow Canadian Dimension and would jave seen my lengthy and centrally located letter in a recent issue on the question of Canadian nationalism and Trots yism.

The reports of my death-political- are grossly exaggerated. In fact I am less a bookman and more a functioning revolutionary than I had been for several years. ..although I am still in books and the art thing. I am enclosing two copies of our paper--one of them with a major article on the Lod book on Canadian art. Forum carried one of the most ignornat reviews which I did not have time to take up--all the more doubtful that they would publish nything by me. The other copy is our latest issue. The Trotskyist movement which was united in one common organization for so many years, what with the phenomenal growth in the number of revolutionary youth calling themselves Trotskyist has undergone a shat ering process. A group of the old guard have got together to publish Forward on a monthly basis. We call ourselves the Socialist League and run a modest but very good bookstore at 53 Gerrard Street West, just a Bay. Where we also have a headquarters where we hold modest forums every Friday night. Jim Mitchell is with us. Possibly you know he lives at 40 Homewood along with myself, David Middleton who you perhpas recall was active in Cuba s lidarity work, John Megran Unitarian Churchman and CP fronter and a sorted other radicals. I held an NDP meeting here last election and pulled togther about 40 persons to hear Lucan Robinson give a rather poor speech

I manage to keep myself in bread by working two days a week at the J.W. Crane Memorial Library, Canada's only libr ary that is exclusively on Geriatrics and Gerontology.

I hope you find the article on Cdn art of interest--I think it is one of the better things that I have written recently. Yes, we shoud talk over Sadie's project first opportunity. I may well be going out of town to a camp out near Deseronto for several days then I am due to go up to visit a friend at Coldwater which should put me back in town just in time to go to work for two days - Wed-Thurs'-15th and 16th. I will be in the store all day Monday and busy that evening. Perhaps Tuesday may be useful. While dont you phone so we can arrange something. Phone me at 40 Homewood first--if Iham not there the call will not be answered--so no cost. Then phone the store. ----595-1284.

Looking forwrd to seeing you again. I gather you are active in the NDP

(ends)

(Oct. 14/76: Note written by RD on back of a Forward Bookstore flyer, printing a poem by Milton Acorn: ''Do Not Turn Out for the Day of Protest'')

Milton Acorn met Ross Dowson on a Toronto street several days prior to the mass general strike called by the Canadian Labour Congress in protest against Trudeau's wages and prices freeze.

He was in the doldrums and Dowson suggested that this day would be a most significant one and a worthy theme for his political talents! He told me he would give it a go. He was staying in a hotel on Jarvis. I went over to get the poem a day or so later so we could get it and run it off for distribution to the demonstration – he told me that it was the only time that he had ever written anything before on an assignment. He was obviously pleased.

The Toronto LSA never recruited him to its ranks (the League for Socialist Action.) While we thought highly of him as a poet we considered him to be too unstable politically. Several months later while he was in Vancouver the LSA there recruited him without consultation. He subsequently went Maoist.

--R.D.

Oct 14/76

DO NOT TURN OUT FOR THE DAY OF PROTEST

By MILTON ACORN*

Do not turn out for the Day of Protest.
The Sunday Sun has hired a true prophet
To announce its failure four days ahead.
Canada's leading humorist, Lubor Zink,
Known to protest all protests but his own
Thinks exactly as his employer thinks;
So don't even think of turning out.
Concentrate on not thinking of it.
Bucking such odds would be suicide. That's wicked.
Why not play safe and buy a lottery ticket?

Do not turn out for the Day of Protest.
It's October and the sap retreats
Down past the frostline to tank up the roots.
The birds and bosses are flying south;
Work will be scarce and oil expensive;
Our Unamerican winter extensive:
Your favorite nuisance will want snowboots.
If you're bad you might be fired; if you're good, laid off —
Figuring out the difference might be tough.
Do I seem to contradict myself?
No... No... No! I swear I've sold out
For one year's good wage to last a lifetime.
Having been born extraordinarily stupid.
Be like me. It's easy. Switch off your mind.

Anyway don't protest for sake of your soul.
The United Church says its illegal and immoral.
Because of her declining congregations
She may soon have to spend her capital.
So don't turn out on the Day of Protest
Or you'll be in league with the Devil
Bringing Holy Bankruptcy one day nearer.
Jesus' father was a carpenter
And so perhaps was Jesus himself.
There seems to be a disconnection here.

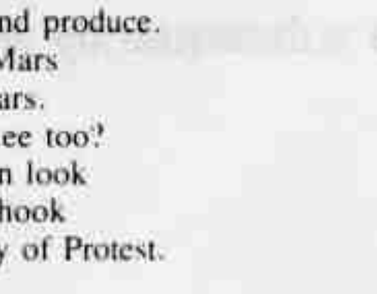
Holy... Holy... Holy is the rich man's greed.
Others must sacrifice so that he'll heed
The still small voice of conscience and produce.
The Yankees are taking potshots at Mars
Profits are shooting for the farther stars.
Why not? Aren't most of them Yankee too?
Carter and Ford will give you a mean look
Like the one under which Vietnam shook
If you recklessly turn out for the Day of Protest.

Do not turn out for the Day of Protest.
Maybe you think I'm kidding? I swear
Sure as my heart's on the right side
I'm sincere in telling you, "Don't do it!"
Wait til 1978. Then vote on it:
Making sure to keep at least your overalls intact.
You'll be arrested if you try to vote naked.

*** once a carpenter**
often called "The Peoples Poet"
Milton Acorn is the embarassed holder of both
the so-called "Anti-Governor General's Prize" (1970)
and The Governor General's Award for Poetry (1975)
Like most poets he's very eager to sell out
and his price is
the whole works
for the working people.

See over

introducing forward bookstore



the widest selection of paperbacks specializing on material of concern to the trade union, student, women's and socialist movement

53 GERRARD STREET W
TORONTO 595-1284

Milton Acorn met Ross Dowson on a Toronto street several days prior to the mass general strike called by the Cdn Labour Congress in protest against Trudeaus wages + prices freeze.

He was in a doldrum and Dowson suggested that this day would be a most significant one and a worthy theme for his poetical talents. He told me he would give it a go. He was staying in a hotel in Jarvis. I went over to get the poem a day or so later so we could get it and run off for distribution to the demonstration — he told me that it was the only time that he had ever written anything before on an assignment. He was obviously pleased. The Toronto LSA never recruited him to the League for Socialist Action. While we thought highly of him as a poet we considered him to be too unstable politically. Several months later while he was in Vancouver the LSA there recruited him without consultation. He subsequently went Maoist

RD

October 15, 1976
53 Gerrard St. W
Toronto

Milton Acorn;

Dear Milt:

Enclosed please find several copies of your poem as we set it up and distributed to several of the key October 14th rallies.

The poem was read to the Toronto rally according to Abie--and recorded by Rogers Cable TV. I handed it to the reporter covering the Midland demonstration who told me he would use it-- What ever else happened to it has yet to be recorded. We ran off about 2,000 copies and inserted it in copies of Forward that were distributed at various points in southern Ontario--I understand Mel Watkins was handed a copy.

Will write later about other matters — fraternally — Ross

October 18, 1976

Dear Comrade Sims:

Thanks for the cheque covering the TSS&ES share of the taxes and upkeep of Poundmaker. I have forwarded the second and final payment of the taxes onto the town clerk---the deadline was September 30--I hope we do not suffer any penalty for delay in payment.

I am enclosing notification for a necessary meeting of the camp directors. As you know there are several matters confronting us, including the sale of the still vacant lot. I checked out the night with Vic H and Lois B who have proved to be the persons most commitmented to rigid schedules and they find that night fine. The Duhig's also find the night fine and have agreed to make their apartment available as last time.

If for any reason you know of several persons who would not be available that evening for any reason please be sure to let me know--we do not want any confusions such as arose through unilateral decisions such as mucked up the tree platning this spring

I was hoping to be able to let you know the bill for the insurance on the lodge which the TSS & ES is responsible for [redacted] Last years was submitted to us by Zenith Insurance who hold the policy on September 30. I checked this out with the agent and he said he would look into it--- last year it was $102.00. I should have this information for you in the next several days--before the meeting. It will probably be a few dollars more due to inflation and we should consider raising the insurance on the lodge as over this summer I further added to its value

Would you be sure to forward the enclosed notices to those now holding the TSS&ES shares--there were changes in personel at the last meeting that I was not aware of.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

Ross Dowson
40 Homewood Ave, #311
Toronto, M4Y 2K2
October 28, 1976

Anne Dowson
c/o Leo Massous
462 Cathedrale
Rimouski, Quebec.

Dear Anne:

I was looking around for your letter, not only to refresh my mind as to its content but to check out the spelling of your hosts name--it is not clear from the little slip of paper Claire gave me with it on .

Yes, I met Denis. He did not have much to say, Freindly. I asked Claire how he makes out with Walter. She said it seems very well. It would appear that in his very large family there are persons whose conduct break from the norms. The most recent get-together was your family (less Walter) and myself having a special supper at Ruth and Lois' J & E seem to be getting along fine. Walter gave as an excuse for not puting in an appearance that he had no clothers--but of course he has the suit Lois gave him which I gather still fits him. Your mother went along with that excuse--that he has no clothes and will not even take the effort to buy them given the money . My impression is that she now only searches for peace--and Walter is peaceful. It seems that at this time --with your mother being in the key position, that no one else can play any useful role. So we bide out time

What happened in Rimouski on October 14. ? Perhaps one of the most significant aspects of the October 14 success was that Quebec actions were dovetailed into the rest of the country's .At a Steelworkers locals in Wawa the other day a union meeting asked four shop stewards who had not come off the job to hand in their credentials. A lot of little punitive actions are being taken against strikers here and there but they are only so much face saving by the bosses. They dare not go very far or they will be given prooof positive of the new militancy that October 14 signaled in organized labor ranks.

The Liberals are in deep trouble down your way with the federalists having to come in behind Bourassa to allow his government to play both sides of the street. It is in trouble because of the effectiveness of the Parti Quebecois and Levesque. I suppose you are aware that the Quebec Federation of Labor(CLC) has come out in support of the PQ as the most worker oriented and democratic of the parties. But since then the NDP has moved out with the promise of some 20 candidates--probably mostly in the Montreal area. Reports are sketchy here but are probably no better re the NDP effort in the Rimouski press. Let us hope that they have some good candidates and put on an effective campaign. Have seen nothing about their program and I fear that they do not support uniligualism in Quebec--necessary in order to have bilingualism there. That other formation around Auf der Mauer in the Montreal area is probably a PQ supported operation designed to get them something useful in the English speaking areas. If you have an opportunity it would be good to go to a PQ meeting. I would be interested to hear about your impress ions. --not only of the meeting but the responses of the circles that you move in. You can be very curious and interested all the more ans an Anglais. Yes you are there in Quebec at an interesting time when you can get a real feeling of the political thinking and level without causing any particular concern. Perhaps some of the hosts family are actively interested in the PQ which is an interesting petty-bourgrois phenomenon.

I hope you are able to keep up your studies--as you know it was a bit risky at a time when you want to get high marks and get good foundations to move into [illegible]

in another language--a rahter critical time for immersion

Things are moving along in the SL. We did big distributions on October 14 in all the major centres in Southern Ontario. To our suprise in many areas ~~wwww~~ we were not only the only Trotskyist tendency paper available but there were no others-including the Stalinists. A few days before the demo I met Milton Acron on the street and in the course of a beer parlour discussions managed to convince him to write up a poem on the day. I will put a copy into this note. It looks like Harry Kopyto will be running with NDP support(at first) for borad of education in the very area that the Jewish organizations are appealing to get public funds for their religious schools. Of course we will take a clear stand of opposition to this, which the NDP has not and it will be quite a hot campaign. A bunch of NDP canadiates are coming forward--a couple of the campaigns are a bit left and we will be active in them looking for contacts and future good will. Our classes are perking up and things look good for the Student Day of Protest at York and elsewhere. We have also told the LSA who have approached us that we do not see any basis for unity--but tell us more. It is possible that Harry Payne might get an NDP B of E nomination.

A funny thing happened yesterday --this time I really did lose my job. The Geriatric Study centre who kept me on after the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services cutback has decided that I cost them too much. They may be on the way to giving up the library. At anyrate tomorrow I must bestir myself to find a new master. But perhaps before I do so I will go out to the camp and finish the Nootka screen I never did finish It has been freezing the last few days but we might still get a warm snap. It is still quite beautiful--with the oaks holding their leaves--yesterday the ash's dropped theirs in whole stems both in Alan Gardens and up at the Geriatric Centre. You know of course what you tried to pass off on me as sumach--some kind for some unecplained reason trans cend their usual grpwth as a shrub and take on the size of trees are actually a type of ash--very common in the downtown area arounf walls and foundations. Murray completed the entire outside structure of his and Jeanette's lodge--it is quite inpressive and he lost 20 pounds.

stick in there

Ross

Ross Dowson,#2311
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto, M4Y 2K2

October,28, 1976

Leila B. Speisman,
555 Deloraine Ave.,
Toronto, M5M 205
787-8214

Dear Leila,

Well it happened --and sooner than either of us though, I am sure.

Yesterday While I was doing some xeroxing Dr. Laird invited me in to give me a message. It was short, sweet and definitive. He had been told to tell me that I was out at the end of the month--the next day. He was freindly and polite--said he had heard nothing but good about me and my work, but the decision had been made and it was out of his hands.

So here I am , already asking you to give me that letter of recommendation we talked about as you pulled away.

I am enclosing sone letterheads just in case you might think that it would be better to have such a letter in such a nice form. Perhaps you might consider giving me a letter dated the last day of your being the librarian at J.W. Crane. I leave this matter to your good judgement.

Frankly I am suprised by the rapid turn of events. I would have thought that they would have wanted me during the transition. But then perhaps they are out to have Joan prove that she cannot only replace a trained librarian but has no need for me either. Then again it may simply be part of a drastic cutback that at this time has stopped only from actually dumping the library itself. Who knows?

As the much anticipated day approaches I hope that this note finds you in excellent health and spirit

bon voyage

Regards

Ross Dowson

(Handwritten letter to Coldwater ON)

Forward BOOKS, 53 Gerrard Street West, Toronto (416) 595-1284

Nov 15/76

Dear Art (Grey)

I am in the store for my regular Monday stint – doing the mailing.

I hope that you are not only arranging to come in on Dec. 12 – but that you take advantage of my apartment and stay here a few days.

Meant to write you before about missing you at the Oct. 14 demo. Of course it was not at all vital for you to be at Midland. A very interesting demo tho – very spirited. I got talking to a couple of people on the demo –shifts of significance are taking place in the labor movement in the areas. A couple of plants were out 100% -- most inspiring was the concept that the demonstrators had of themselves as a mobile roving demonstration. As they pulled off for a repeat at Penetanguishene a woman came up and asked me for several copies for friends – I couldn`t go with them because of transit uncertainties.

We are tied up with Harry Kopyto; Harry Paine`s and individual comrades` involvement in other campaigns. I will have to get into the Heap-Sparrow campaign in my apartment – it has become the key one due to a business – red-baiting counter campaign – although the sectarians are not supporting it for despite Heap`s being the best known NDP he is not waving the label in every occasion.

Fraternally,
Ross

Give my regards to your mother. Beautiful day today.